

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, EMIN, SU

SUBJECT: US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY ASSISTANCE TO SUDAN

REF: STATE 185593

1. ACCOMPANIED BY DCM, CALLED ON MINSTATE FOR INDUSTRY DR. AMIN ABU SINEINA AUG 2 TO OUTLINE PROPOSED USGS ROLE. DURING MEETING MINISTER OF MININDUSTRY BADR AL-DIN SULEIMAN, JUST BACK FROM CAIRO, SUBSEQUENTLY JOINED US. REFERRING SULEIMAN'S TALK WITH DEPUTY SECRETARY ROBINSON JUNE 11, I SAID WE HAD BEEN CONSIDERING HOW BEST RESPOND. DESPITE FACT USGS PRIMARILY DOMESTIC AGENCY, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR IT TO UNDERTAKE WORK IN SUDAN ON REIMBURSABLE BASIS.

2. SIEINA EXPRESSED PLEASURE BUT NOTED THAT FRG, USSR AND PRC HAVE GEOLOGICAL PROGRAMS HERE WHICH ARE PROVIDED AS GRANT AID. I DESCRIBED LIMITATIONS ON OUR ABILITY TO PROVIDE SUCH ASSISTANCE AND OFFERED PERSONAL SUGGESTION THAT GOS MAY HAVE SOME SUCCESS IN INTERESTING SAUDI ARABIA IN PROJECT, SINCE USGS HAS HAD SUCCESSFUL SAUDI PROGRAM FOR OVER 30 YEARS. SULEIMAN ASKED WHETHER REIMBURSABLE ASSISTANCE MEANT THAT USG WOULD MAKE INITIAL PAYMENTS WHICH WOULD BE REIMBURSED LATER, ALONG LINES UNDP REVOLVING FUND. WE EXPLAINED THAT THIS WAS UNLIKELY; RATHER, FUND WOULD HAVE TO BE ESTABLISHED PRIOR TO BEGINNING OF ANY PROGRAM.

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3. AFTER CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION SULEIMAN EXPRESSED

VIEW THAT USG RESPONSE TO HIS INITIAL QUERY MARKED "STEP FORWARD" AND NOW IT WAS HIS RESPONSIBILITY TO APPROACH GOS PLANNING DEPARTMENT WHICH HAS CENTRAL CONTROL OF FUNDS. WE AGREED TO PROVIDE MAIN POINTS CONTAINED REFTEL IN LETTER TO MINISTRY.

4. COMMENT. SUDANESE OFFICIALS WERE DISAPPOINTED USG COULD NOT FUND PROGRAM. THEY SEEMED SOMEWHAT HESITANT TO APPROACH OTHERS FOR FUNDING ALTHOUGH SULEIMAN INDICATED HE WOULD CONSIDER DOING SO IF NECESSARY. OF COURSE, ONE QUESTION IS COST OF PROGRAM, WHICH IN TURN DEPENDS ON THE MAGNITUDE. EVEN IF SOURCE PROJECT FUNDING IN PRINCIPLE IDENTIFIED, WE INDICATED IT WAS UNLIKELY USGS OFFICIALS WOULD PAY INITIAL VISIT AT USG EXPENSE TO WORK OUT PROGRAM DETAILS. HOWEVER, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH USG TO CONSIDER FINANCING VISIT OF USGS REP FROM SAUDI ARABIA OR ELSEWHERE TO DISCUSS PROGRAM DETAILS WITH GOS TECHNICIANS. ECONOMIC BENEFITS THAT WOULD STEM FROM DEVELOPMENT OF SUDAN MINERAL POTENTIAL COULD BE OF CONSIDERABLE EVENTUAL BENEFIT, NOTABLY TO US FIRMS WHICH WOULD LIKELY BE ATTRACTED BY USGS ROLE. WOULD APPRECIATE DEPT. COMMENTS ON THIS POINT.
BREWER

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